

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 HA-05 AGR-01 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01
CIAE-00 COM-02 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10
INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-06 ICA-11
OES-09 SP-02 SS-15 STR-08 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 LAB-04
SIL-01 PA-01 /149 W
-----066699 240347Z /15

R 211719Z SEP 79
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6411
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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EO 12065: N/A
TAGS: PEPR SHUM ENRG GT MX
SUBJECT: LUCAS-LOPEZ PORTILLO MEETING: THE VIEW FROM GUATEMALA

REF: (A) MEXICO 16226, (B) GUATEMALA 6150

1. GUATEMALAN OBSERVERS OF THE SEPTEMBER 18 PRESIDENTIAL MEETING IN CHIAPAS TENDED TO ATTACH MORE IMPORTANCE TO THE SYMBOLISM OF THE MEETING ITSELF THAN TO ANY OF THE PUBLICIZED POINTS OF AGREEMENT. THIS FOLLOWS FROM THE GUATEMALAN ESTABLISHMENT'S CONCERN AT WHAT IT PERCEIVES AS THE GOG'S EVER-INCREASING DIPLOMATIC ISOLATION.

2. WHILE THE LOCAL PRESS FOCUSSED MUCH ATTENTION ON THE HOPE OF ASSURED AND RELATIVELY CHEAPER OIL FROM MEXICO, IT WAS LITTLE IMPRESSED WITH THE MEXICAN UNDERTAKING TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM GLOBALLY, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, WITHIN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FRAMEWORK OF MEXICO'S PLANNED UN PROPOSALS. AT THE SAME TIME NATIONALISTS SEEMED REASSURED THAT THE NOTION OF JOINT UTILIZATION OF THE USUMACINTA RIVER DREW ONLY THE MOST PRELIMINARY VALIDATION IN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE. IT PROMISED MERELY A "REPORT ON STUDIES WHICH SHOULD BE DEVELOPED." (GUATEMALAN CRITICS SAY MEXICAN RESERVOIR PROPOSALS WOULD, IF IMPLEMENTED, FLOOD MUCH OF THE PETEN

LOWLANDS OF GUATEMALA.)

3. AS SUGGESTED IN REF A, GUATEMALAN COMMENTATORS SEIZED UPON THE USUALLY PRO-FORMA BOW IN THE COMMUNIQUE TO NON-INTERVENTION AS SOMETHING OF A VINDICATION FOR THE GOG, WHICH SEES ITSELF UNDER INCREASING EXTERNAL ATTACK.

4. WE NOTE THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS REFERENCE IN THE COMMUNIQUE (HIGHLIGHTING THE NEW INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COURT) IS VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL TO REFERENCES IN THE GUATEMALA-VENEZUELA COMMUNIQUE (GUATEMALA 5905) EARLIER THIS MONTH.

5. IF GUATEMALAN PRESS COVERAGE WAS LESS SYMPATHETIC THAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED, IT MAY HAVE BEEN DUE TO THE LATENT RESENTMENT MANY GUATEMALANS HARBOR TOWARD THEIR BIG BROTHER TO THE NORTH, AND TO THE TREATMENT LUCAS' PRESS ENTOURAGE RECEIVED AT THE HANDS OF HIS COUNTERPART'S ZEALOUS SECURITY GUARD. LA TARDE CAPTURED SOME OF THIS FLAVOR WITH ITS HEADLINE "MEXICO WILL GIVE US THREE BILLION...FLIES," AN ALLUSION TO THE MEDITERRANEAN FRUIT FLY STERILIZATION PROJECT WHICH WAS THE OCCASION FOR THE CEREMONIES.

6. WE UNDERSTAND FROM NEWSMAN WHO ACCOMPANIED LUCAS THAT LOPEZ PORTILLO INDICATED HE MIGHT VISIT GUATEMALA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NEXT YEAR. ORTIZ

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